SENATE STATE GOVERNMENT, WAGERING, TOURISM & HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2865

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 18, 2024

The Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism & Historic Preservation Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 2865.

As amended by the committee, this bill establishes "The Voter Convenience Act," to allow voters to vote at any polling place in their municipality on election day.

Under current law, a polling place is used by the voters of several election districts. When voters walk into their assigned polling place, they must then go to the table for their assigned election district, and vote on that district's voting machine.

Under this bill, as amended by the committee, the Secretary of State in conjunction with all county clerks, county boards of elections, and superintendents of elections, are directed to develop uniform guidelines to enable a county board of elections and superintendent of elections, at their discretion, to implement a process by which the voters of each municipality in that county may be permitted to cast their vote at any polling place in their municipality on the day of any election. Under the bill, the district boards of elections at each polling place in a municipality would be organized at the polling place in a manner that permits any member of a district board to check-in any voter walking into the polling place within their municipality, using electronic poll books. Under this process, the voter would be able to vote at any voting machine at the polling place, using the correct ballot for that voter, which would identify the voter's election district. To the extent made possible by available technology, the requirement to issue a voting authority to each voter would be replaced by a suitable procedure. The bill would allow this process to also be used to establish countywide polling places, whereby a voter who is a resident of that county would be able to cast their vote.

This bill also amends current law to allow the county boards of elections to determine the number of district board members needed at each polling place where the bill's provisions are implemented. The bill, as amended by the committee, amends current law to

include a website that lists the location of the polling places under the bill on the primary election and general election sample ballots.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The amendments include superintendents of elections in the development of uniform guidelines and implementation of the bill. The amendments also provide for a website that lists the location of the polling place or places on the sample ballots.